

guest asked the same question, and he was given a detailed answer. It became evident to him that they were his parents in his former life. He knelt down to pay respect to them. Saru affectionately invited him into the house, and, staring at him as he sat in the seat of honor, said, "Aren't you the spirit of my deceased son?" Their guest told them in detail about his dream and announced that the old couple were his parents. Saru, after some reminiscing, motioned to him, saying, "My late son, so and so, lived in this hall, read this scripture, and used this pitcher." The son entered the hall, opened the scripture, and found that the character which he could never remember was missing, for it had been burned with a lamp. When the young man repented of his offense and repaired the text, he could recite it correctly. Parents and son were amazed and delighted, and the son never lost the parent-child relationship and his sense of filial piety.⁹

The note says: How happy is this member of the Kusakabe family who, in pursuit of the path through Buddhist scriptures, recited the *Hoke-kyō* in two lives, present and past, and served two fathers to be renowned in posterity.¹⁰ It is an extraordinary phenomenon, and not commonplace. Indeed, we are sure it is due to the divine influence of the *Hoke-kyō* and the miraculous power of Kannon. In the same spirit, the *Zen'aku inga-kyō* 善惡因果經¹¹ says, "Look at present effects if you want to know past causes. Look at present deeds if you want to know future effects."¹²

I9

On Ridiculing a Reciter of the Hoke-kyō and Getting a Twisted Mouth as an Immediate Penalty¹

In Yamashiro 山背 province² there was once a self-ordained novice³

9. 孝養 *kōyō*; cf. Michihata, *Tōdai Bukkyōshi*, 271-380.
10. He who remembers his previous births succeeds in freeing himself from the world of *samsara*, according to Buddhist tradition. See Chap. II(2)c.
11. *Taishō*, LXXXV, No. 2881. The quotation is not found in this scripture.
12. Quoted from the *Shōkyō yōshū*, XI (*Taishō*, LIX, 33c). 欲知過去因 見其現在果 欲知未來報 見其現在業。

1. Cf. *Sanhō ekotoba* (II, 9), *Hokke kenki* (III, 90), *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XIV, 28).
2. Southern part of present Kyoto-fu.
3. 自度 *jido* or 私度 *shido*: a novice or monk without an official permit 度牒. Although the *Sōni-ryō* prescribes punishments for lay people who pretend to be monks and nuns (Article 22), a number of people left home and attempted to obtain immunity from taxation. See Chap. I(1)d; Tsunoto Ryōgaku, "Nihon ryōkei ni miuru shido no shami ni tsuite," *Ryūkyoku daigaku ronshū*, No. 348 (December 1954), 37-46.

whose name is unknown. He used to play *go* 碁 all the time. One day when he was playing *go* with a layman,⁵ a mendicant came to recite the *Hoke-kyō*⁶ and beg for alms. The novice laughed at him, mimicking his accent with a twisted mouth. The layman was greatly shocked at this and exclaimed, "How awful!" at each turn in the game. The layman won the game every time, and the novice lost. Meanwhile the novice's mouth became twisted, and no medicine could cure it. The gist of this story is stated in the *Hoke-kyō* as follows: "Those who laugh at and slight this scripture will lose many teeth and get a twisted mouth, a flattened nose, crippled limbs and squint eyes."⁷ It is better to be possessed by evil spirits and talk in a daze than to abuse the devotees of the *Hoke-kyō*. Remember that evil comes from one's mouth.⁸

20

On a Monk Who Gave away the Firewood Provided to Heat the Bath and Was Reborn as an Ox for Labor, Showing an Extraordinary Sign¹

Saka Eshō 釋惠勝² was a monk³ of Engō-ji 延興寺.⁴ Once he gave away a bundle of firewood to be used for boiling water for the bath,⁵ and then he died.

At that time the temple kept a cow which gave birth to a calf. When the calf grew into an ox, it was continually made to draw a cart filled with firewood. One day, as it entered the temple precincts

4. The *Sōni-ryō* (Article 9) prohibits monks and nuns from performing music or games of chance, but they are allowed to play the *koto* 琴 (a string instrument) and the game of *go*. See Sanson, "Early Japanese Laws," Part Two, 129.
5. 白衣 *byakuue*, meaning literally "white robe," in contrast to the saffron or black robes of monks.
6. *Hoke-kyō*-bon.
7. *Hoke-kyō*, XXVIII (*Taishō*, IX, 62a). 若有輕笑之者 當世世牙齒墮缺 顴骨平鼻 手腳離展 眼目角疎. See Katō, trans., *Myōhō-ryōge-kyō*, 438.
8. 惡鬼 *akuri*; when one is possessed by an evil spirit, one's mouth becomes the channel for its message. There was a belief that illness or madness was caused by evil spirits.

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XX, 20).
2. For Saka, see I.14, n. 2. Eshō is unknown.
3. 沙門 *shamon*; see Chap. I(1)a, n. 4.
4. Undidentified.
5. The practice of taking a steam bath was introduced to Japan by Buddhist monks during the Nara period, and a special room for taking a hot bath, which was almost a luxury, was built in many temples. Cf. *Onijisu senyoku shūō-kyō* 溫室洗浴衆僧經 (*Taishō*, XVI, No. 701).

pulling the cart, a strange monk at the gate was heard to say, "Though Dharma Master Eshō could read the *Nehan-gyō* 涅槃經⁶ very well, he could not draw a cart." Hearing this, the ox shed tears, sighed, and passed away instantly. The driver of the ox accused the monk, saying, "You killed the ox with a curse," and reported him to the officials. The official who heard the driver's charge turned to question the monk and was surprised at his extraordinarily noble look and radiant body. In secret he invited the monk to a purified room and told painters to paint the monk exactly as he appeared. Presently they brought the portraits of the monk, all of which turned out to be pictures of Bodhisattva Kannon.⁷ Meanwhile, the monk suddenly disappeared.

We are sure that the monk was none other than an incarnation of Kannon. No matter how hungry you are, it is better to eat dust rather than what belongs to the sangha,⁸ which is always present. This is what the *Daihōdō-kyō* 大方等經⁹ tells us in the following passage: "I would save those who have committed the four grave sins¹⁰ and the five deadly sins,¹¹ but not those who have stolen from the sangha."¹²

21

On Gaining an Immediate Penalty for Driving a Heavily Burdened Horse without Mercy¹

In Kawachi 河内 province² there was once a man named Isowake 石別 who used to sell melons. He would saddle a horse³ with an over-

6. *Daihatsu nehan-gyō* (Taishō, XII, No. 375).

7. See 1.6, n. 4.

8. 常住僧, *jōin no sō*, which is a manifestation of one of the Three Treasures for the purpose of maintaining and transmitting Buddha's teachings. See Chap. II(3)b.

9. Probably a shortened title of the *Daihōdō daijiki-kyō* 大方等大集經 (Taishō, XIII, No. 397).

10. 四重 *shijū*; the four grave sins are killing, stealing, licentious acts, and telling lies; monks and nuns who commit any one of them will be expelled from the sangha.

11. 五逆 *gogyaku*; the five deadly sins are killing one's father, killing one's mother, killing an arhat, injuring the body of Buddha, and causing disunity in the sangha. It is said that those who commit any one of them will fall into hell.

12. 四重五逆我亦能救 盜僧物者我所不救 *Bonmō-kyō koshakui* 梵網經古遠記 (III, 2) gives this passage as a quotation from *Hōdō-kyō* 方等經, but it cannot be located in that text (Taishō, XI, No. 1815).

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XX, 29).

2. Present Ōsaka-fu.

3. Although this story does not give any date, the use of a horse may indicate a date later than the seventh century, when horses began to be used widely. See Naoki, *Nihon kodai hetsuishi no kenkyū*, 200.

whelming burden and, if it failed to move, would whip it angrily and drive it forward. The horse staggered along with its eyes full of tears. When Isowake had sold all of the melons, he would then kill the horse. After he had killed a number of horses in this way, Isowake happened to look into a kettle of boiling water, whereupon his two eyes fell into the kettle and were boiled.

Swift is the penalty for evil deeds. How can we not believe in the law of karmic causality? Beasts in the present life might have been our parents in a past life. We pass through the six modes of existence⁴ and four manners of birth.⁵ Reflection shows us that we cannot be without mercy.⁶

22

On Showing an Extraordinary Sign at the Moment of Death Owing to Devotion to Buddhist Studies and Spreading the Teaching for the Benefit of All Beings¹

The late Dharma Master Dōshō 道照² belonged to the Fune 船 family³ in Kawachi province.⁴ Under the emperor's auspices⁵ he went abroad for Buddhist studies to T'ang China, where he met and studied with Hsüan-tsang san-tsang 玄奘三藏.⁶ This master said to his

4. 六道 *rokudō*; heaven, man, *asura*, animal, hungry ghosts, and hell (being). See Chap. I(2)a, n. 126.

5. 四生 *shishō*; 胎生 (*garāyujā*) birth from the womb (man, animal), 卵生 (*andajā*) birth from the egg (bird), 濕生 (*samsvedajā*) birth from moisture (insect), and 化生 (*upapādikā*) emanation by the force of karma (heavenly being, hell being).

6. 慈悲 *jhi*; see I.10, n. 5.

1. Cf. *Shōken Nihongi* (I, Mommu 4.3:10), *Fusō ryakui* (IV, V), *Gonkō shakusho* (I, i), *Sanhō ekaioia* (II, 2), *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XI, 4), etc. See Chap. I(1)d.

2. He went to T'ang China in 653, returned in 661, and founded the Hossō School in Japan. See Chap. I(1)a, n. 6, and d, n. 105. His was the first recorded cremation in Japan, in 700.

3. The Fune family is descended from Ō Shin-ni 王辰爾 of Paekche. (See *Nihon shoki*, XIX, Kimmie 14-7: XXIV, Kōgyoku 4:4:12.) In the early history of Japanese Buddhism, immigrants' descendants played a significant role, and many became eminent monks. See Chap. I(1)c, n. 61.

4. The *Shōken Nihongi* says he is of Tajih district in Kawachi province, that is, present Fujiidera-shi, Ōsaka-fu 大阪府藤井寺市.

5. Emperor Kōtoku sent envoys to China accompanied by student monks, among whom Dōshō's name is found. See *Nihon shoki* (XXV, Hakuchi 4:5:12), Aston, "Nihongi," II, 242-244.

6. (d. 664) An eminent monk and the most famous T'ang pilgrim to India. He went to China in 629 and came back in 645 with many Buddhist scriptures. He dedicated himself to the task of translating as many as seventy-three items. He is also known as the author of the *Ta-t'ang hsi-yü chi* 大唐西域記 (Records of the Western Regions). 三藏 *san-tsang* means the Three Baskets of the Buddhist Canon, *tripitaka*. In China it is also used as an honorific title for those well-read in the Buddhist scriptures or those who translate them. See Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chiang's Travels in India*, 2 vols.